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'Afire for the Gospel'

Lottie Moon mission gifts grow to \$149.3M, third-largest ever

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Southern Baptists gave \$149.3 million to the 2012 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions.

The 2012 Lottie Moon Offering, finalized June 5, totaled \$149,276,303.72. It surpassed last year's offering of \$146.8 million by more than \$2.4 million and marked the third-highest amount given in the offering's 124-year history.

Speaking on behalf of missionaries across the globe, International Mission Board President Tom Elliff expressed gratitude to God for the generosity of Southern Baptists.

"The significance of the Lottie Moon Offering for International Missions, promoted each year in partnership with Woman's Missionary Union, can only be understood in light of eternity," Elliff said. "This year's offering, showing an increase during financially challenging days for our nation, is a reminder that missions is the stack pole around which Southern Baptists place their hearts, afire for the Gospel."

Southern Baptists' missions giving is "the clear, undeniable barometer of our passion," Elliff said, noting that "nothing would

so urge God to turn His face away from our convention, its churches and people as a loss of zeal for fulfilling the Great Commission."

Although recent statistics show a decline of 2.4 percent in overall giving among Southern Baptist churches, Elliff expressed optimism about this increase in their continued missions support.

"I pray this year's offering is an unmistakable indication that in coming days Southern Baptists will give, go and carry the Gospel together — to the ends of the earth," he said.

Wanda Lee, executive director-treasurer of Woman's Mission Union, also expressed gratitude to Southern Baptists for the increase.

"We were excited to hear about the significant increase of \$2.4 million over last year's receipts for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering," Lee said. "How exciting, after four years of economic challenges, to see Southern Baptists continue to increase their giving to our international missions offering. While we are grateful for this third-largest offering in our history, we are still praying for individuals and churches to understand the biblical call to stewardship and sacri-

ficial giving that will enable more to go and more to hear the wonderful story of Jesus."

Along with Southern Baptists' regular giving through the Cooperative Program, the Lottie Moon offering, named for Southern Baptists' most famous missionary, supports nearly 4,900 missionaries worldwide. It funds salaries, housing, medical care and children's education. Supporting one missionary overseas costs an average of nearly \$50,000 per year — or \$136 per day.

Most important, Lottie Moon support made it possible for IMB missionaries, working with their ministry partners around the globe, to communicate the Gospel to more than 1.4 million people, lead more than 337,000 to faith in Christ, baptize 266,451 new believers and start more than 24,000 churches, according to IMB's most recent annual statistical report in 2011.

Frank Page, president of the SBC Executive Committee, said of the \$149.3 million offering, "Let's see this as but a stepping stone toward far more sacrifice and passion so that men, women, boys and girls across this globe

see LOTTIE on p. 9

FOLLOWING CHRIST — Gifts to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions made it possible for IMB missionaries and their ministry partners around the globe to lead more than 337,000 people to faith in Christ in 2011 — like this passionate young believer. The 2012 Lottie Moon offering, which totaled \$149.3 million, will enable nearly 4,900 missionaries to continue their work. That amount, third-largest in the offering's 124-year history, will fund missionary salaries, housing, medical care and children's education. Supporting one missionary overseas costs an average of nearly \$50,000 per year — or \$136 per day.

VBS is evangelistic rallying point for church

PANAMA CITY, Fla. (BP) — As Tropical Storm Debby was bearing down on Panama City last year, First Church leaders wondered if any youngsters would brave the harsh conditions to attend the first day of Vacation Bible School.

"The winds were blowing and the rains were coming in," recalled children's minister Ginger Owens.

By the time opening day registration began, in addition to the 500-plus preregistered children who were present, another 200 children and their parents stood in the torrential rains to register at the door. The final total involved in the study of God's Word that week approached 800.

Tropical Storm Debby, despite dire predictions, bypassed the

Florida Panhandle city.

Still not out of danger on that first VBS morning, the television station adjacent to the church announced tornadic activity moving through the downtown area. Quickly a strategy to safely shelter the children was developed. Yet, the wind and squalls never came, prompting the local meteorologist to say there was no reason to explain why the storms had dissipated over the city.

"But we knew," Owens said. "We were on our knees praying. It was the first day of VBS and we were studying God's amazing power over nature and so we truly experienced it that Monday morning."

Nearly a decade ago, the church

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Ginger Owens, children's minister at First Church in Panama City, Fla., visits with children at an after-school program who were involved in the church's Vacation Bible School. (Photo by Michael Duncan.)

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From the editor

WILLIAM PERKINS

Line up!

The photograph was striking. Outside the Moscone Convention Center in San Francisco, hundreds of people were queuing for Apple's 2013 Worldwide Developers Conference — an event that wasn't scheduled to begin for two more days.

Rumor was that the Apple big-wigs planned to use the conference's keynote address to announce the newest mobile operating system for iPhones and iPads, an event for which quite a few people were apparently willing to sacrifice two perfectly good days of their lives doing nothing except keeping watch on a locked door.

The operating system was not available for purchase at the conference, mind you. Only an announcement of the operating system was to be made, and that was a rumor. Apple, tightlipped as ever, had not commented on whether the system was even ready to roll out. That means the folks were lining up two days in advance to hear a possible announcement of a possible new system, or maybe not.

That's not all that unusual in our culture. Masses of people begin forming lines around stores before daylight on the day after Thanksgiving. Same goes for the day after Christmas, to return all those items for which we stood in lines on the day after Thanksgiving. Americans are willing to stand in line for grand openings, ball games, free food samples, newly-released movies, and any book with the words, "Fifty Shades of ..." in the title.

It seems we'll line up anywhere, anytime, for anything. Except for church, that is.

When was the last time anyone saw a long line snaking around one of our churches on a Sunday morning, filled with people anticipating an electrifying spiritual experience? If people will line up for almost anything, why won't they line up for worship?

If someone comes up with a comprehensive answer to that question, he/she will have accomplished a powerful Kingdom work. It could be there is no one universal answer. Maybe the problem goes deeper, sociologically and psychologically, than we know. The buildings are there, the air conditioning is on, and the program has been planned. Why aren't people coming?

Perhaps we should start answer-

ing that question with a long, hard look in the mirror. Do our churches feel like sanctuaries from the world, where the grateful and the saved can find a brief respite from the evil that surrounds them each day to worship — really worship — the one true and living God and his one true and living Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior?

Do people believe they have had a real encounter with God when they come to our churches? Do worshippers feel the presence of the Holy Spirit? Was everything that happened during worship service designed to give honor and glory to God, as it should be?

That may not be the case, more often than we care to admit. We could be turning people off — yea, driving them away — with our conduct and lack of spiritual preparedness. Many of us arrive at church on Sundays unwilling to check our worldly concerns at the door. We're mad at a fellow church member. We grasp for control. We are unforgiving. We are unyielding to the leadership of the Lord, just for one hour.

We are distracted by all of that and more, so we don't see the young family that is visiting for the first time. We miss the woman burdened by self-awareness of her sin. We overlook the man who is in church for the first time ever, seeking spiritual help but having no idea how to ask for it.

Our words are unfriendly, and our conduct betrays how cliquish we are. We constantly check our watches, and sneak peeks at our text messages. We rush out before the close of the service, usually during the hymn of invitation, so we can beat everyone to the buffet.

That's not a picture of every church, but it's a picture of some churches, and considering the importance of the task put before us by none other than Jesus Christ (Matt. 28:18-20), one church like that is too many.

Let's work harder in our respective churches, every Sunday, to be spiritually friendly and personally prepared for worship. That is the environment in which the God we serve can do a mighty and holy work in each of us, and in each of the people around us.

If we can do that, it won't be long before there's another place in town where people will be lining up. Now, wouldn't that be something?

Why Calvinists and Arminians can unite for religious liberty

This week my denomination met, days after a special committee tasked with seeking unity between Calvinists and non-Calvinists in the Southern Baptist Convention issued a report to SBC Executive Committee President Frank Page. The report concludes what I've long suspected: We have much more uniting us across these questions than dividing us, and most of us are ready to love one another and work together.

I think it's important, though, to consider how both the Calvinist and Arminian streams in Christian life bring important emphases together when it comes to one of the most important questions of our time: religious liberty.

James Leland was a Baptist evangelist in the revolutionary era, who agitated Thomas Jefferson and James Madison to include constitutional guarantees of religious liberty. He railed against the Anglican state churches, with their restrictions on Gospel preaching. He did so for theological reasons. At one time, he defined his theology as one that preaches "the doctrines of sovereign grace with a little of what is called Arminianism."

I think both traditions, and the in-between place, have some things to contribute to our defense of a free church in a free state.

Many of our early Baptist forebears were thoroughgoing Arminians, defining the freedom of the human will in libertarian terms. These include such heroes as Thomas Helwys, who fought against the government's mistaken belief that it could overrule the conscience.

Sometimes people caricature Arminians, and those who share some convictions with them. The Arminian tradition doesn't believe that the human will is naturally free in this fallen era. They believe that God graciously empowers human beings with the freedom to choose. In fact, much of what some Christians call "Arminianism" is instead the sort of manipulative, emotional revivalism they've seen or heard about somewhere. Arminians are, above all people, opposed to manipulation.

They believe, after all, that the human



Guest opinion

with Russell D. Moore

will must make a free decision to follow Jesus or to walk away. That means a clear presentation of what the Gospel entails, with all the "cost-counting" that Jesus tells us about. This must be a personal, free decision, and can't be outsourced to or vetoed by some emperor or bishop or bureaucrat.

The Arminian tradition in Baptist life is committed to religious liberty because of their commitment to free decision. Because God has created every conscience free, they say, no church or no state can compel someone to act contrary to conscience. This is an important point that ought to serve as a reminder even for those who don't agree on the theological details.

After all, all Christians, whatever our theological system, affirm that all of us will stand in judgment. We will have no government agency, no denominational entity, standing there with us. We will stand with our consciences, and we can stand only with one Advocate, one Mediator. With that the case, no government has the authority to impede God's purposes in readying us to give an account on that day.

The Calvinist tradition also has much to contribute to religious liberty. While many in the Reformed tradition have had an awful record when it comes to soul freedom, from Geneva to the Puritan colonies of New England, the same is not true in the Calvinistic wing of the Baptist tradition. Many, including the English Particular Baptists and American Calvinist Baptists such as Isaac Backus were stalwart defenders of religious liberty. Why?

Well, like the Arminians, Calvinists

see MOORE on p. 5

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BOY SCOUTS

BSA defenders leave concerns unanswered

HOUSTON (BP) — A statement by the Association of Baptists for Scouting has urged churches to continue their involvement with Boy Scout troops without addressing cautions noted by key leaders over the BSA's acceptance of homosexuality.

Among the concerns addressed by Southern Baptist leaders are whether churches should embrace an organization that openly opposes biblical standards for morality, whether churches will be caught up in litigation resulting from the policy change and how the Scouts will protect boys from a potential increase in sexual abuse of children.

In an official statement of the Association of Baptists for Scouting released to Baptist Press June 6, A.J. Smith, the organization's president, set forth four points in interpreting the change in the Boy Scouts' membership policy. National Scouting officials, he said, signed off on his interpretations.

The BSA policy change approved in May, Smith said, "clearly states that sexual activity among Scout-aged youth is contrary to Scouting virtues." Therefore, he concluded, a Scouting unit "could have in its statement a list of behavioral expectations regarding sexual abstinence as a condition of membership."

The new BSA policy "does not say that a youth may not be denied membership if his behavior becomes a distraction to the program or the performance of the unit," Smith said.

A third interpretation Smith set forth is that the new policy "does not require that a church-chartered unit affirm the moral acceptability of same-sex attraction."

Churches, Smith said, retain the right under the resolution "to ask adult leaders to exemplify by word and example the positive nature of traditional, heterosexual marriage as their recognized standard [of] what it means to be morally straight."

Officials from the Boy Scouts of America, including their general counsel, told Smith his interpretations were correct as long as a charter organization did not try to exclude a boy solely on the basis of his perceived sexual orientation.

In short, Baptist churches that charter Scout units have

the power to enforce a code of conduct on the boys that precludes their ability to engage in any kind of sexual activity and to bring disciplinary measures to bear on youth who violate the code of conduct," Smith wrote in asking churches to continue to participate in Scouting as a way of reaching youth who might not otherwise be reached with the Gospel.

R. Chip Turner, chairman of the Boy Scouts of America Religious Relationships Task Force and a past president of the Association of Baptists for Scouting, wrote an open letter to Southern Baptists in the same spirit as Smith's statement, encouraging Baptists not to pull out of Scouting.

"As 'fishers of men,' are we not to go where the fish are located? In the case of church-based Scout units, there are unreached people already in your buildings," Turner wrote, adding that Baptists should be "at the forefront in helping youth find answers which are biblically-based."

"Shall we abandon an organization which needs our influence now more than ever?" Turner wrote.

The Atlanta-area church led by former SBC president Bryant Wright has announced an end to its affiliation with the Boy Scouts over the BSA acceptance of openly homosexual members.

"One of the reasons we've loved Boy Scouts is because so many non-Christians and unchurched people have come into our Scout troop, and then some of those — not many, but some — do wind up not only coming to Christ, but coming into the church," Wright, pastor of Johnson Ferry Baptist Church in Marietta, told Baptist Press June 10. "So it's with great grief that we've made this decision. It's frustrating to us because it's been forced upon us because of the actions of the Boy Scouts."

Wright said other churches may have a different view about whether to break relations now with the Scouts or continue their partnerships and see what direction the BSA takes in the future. While Johnson Ferry will continue to work with boys to help them finish as an Eagle Scout with the church's troop, Wright said the church decided it needed to take action now.

"Shall we abandon an organization which needs our influence now more than ever?"

R. Chip Turner

chairman of the Boy Scouts of America Religious Relationships Task Force



JOIN ONE MILLION MEN — Jay Dennis, the Baptist pastor who is leading the Join One Million Men anti-pornography initiative, tapes a video this spring as part of a DVD for use in churches. The campaign moved into gear in conjunction with the June 11-12 SBC annual meeting in Houston. (Photo by Terrie Turner)

Anti-pornography initiative begins national push at SBC

LAKELAND, Fla. (BP) — "We're beginning a new sermon series that is scaring me to death," pastor Jay Dennis said on Sunday, Jan. 20, 2008, from the pulpit of First Church at the Mall.

The series was titled "Sex and the Saint." For six Sundays, Dennis addressed what God says in His Word about sex. His goal: to combat a "stronghold" in the congregation that destroys Christian families and harms teenagers, singles and even children — the stronghold of sexual sin.

Dennis candidly conceded to the congregation that he would be criticized and misunderstood, that he would receive angry letters and emails, and that he fully expected to find himself in a spiritual battle.

He indeed experienced a heavy spiritual attack on his physical health and, though he said he still has his critics, Dennis told Baptist Press, "The response was overwhelmingly positive and opened a door for our members to communicate their concerns about pornography use among Christian men."

"I am convinced that God's people, for the most part, want clear, biblical teachings on sexual issues."

That sermon series at the Lakeland, Fla., church, and other sermons Dennis has preached since, have laid the foundation for a nationwide movement: Join One Million Men (joinmillionmen.org), was introduced in conjunction with the Southern Baptist Convention's June 11-12 annual meeting in Houston. The movement calls Christian men to commit to sexual purity and, specifically, to protect themselves and their families from the devastation caused by pornography.

In interviews with Baptist Press, Dennis recounted his journey and his resolve to ex-

pose and eradicate "the pink elephant in the pew."

BAPTIST PRESS: Why did you decide in 2008 to address sexual issues from the pulpit?

DENNIS: I remember being burdened that I had never, from the Sunday morning pulpit, addressed issues related to healthy biblical sex. It seemed that most of what even Christians were hearing was coming from a secular worldview. My heart was to raise up the biblical standard among the people I pastored regarding a subject that far too many pastors had, perhaps out of fear or awkwardness, simply chosen not to address.

Later that year I began to see the need for addressing the issue of pornography specifically. The door had been opened that sexual issues would be discussed from the pulpit, but in a grace-filled and sensitive approach. I am burdened that until God's people understand what healthy biblical sex is, we won't see Satan's counterfeits.

BP: You have asserted that 80 percent of men in churches struggle with pornography in some way. What led you to that conclusion?

DENNIS: I reached the conclusion based on research, multiple discussions with those whose ministry focused on this issue, discussions with pastors, watching how the data is trending upwards, the prevalence of pornography, and understanding the secretive nature of Christians viewing pornography. Most experts I talk to believe that 80 percent is a conservative figure.

BP: Have you ever been personally affected in your life by pornography?

DENNIS: As an 11-year old boy a friend showed me a pornographic picture, and that one image opened the door of curiosity that from then on I had to

guard against. I am 53 and most men my age were exposed in a similar manner. However, now it is almost entirely Internet pornography. Although not a daily struggle, it is an awareness that I must always be on guard for the enemy to attack. I have especially had to be careful as I conducted extensive research concerning the issue of pornography. Huge prayer support and accountability are essential for me.

BP: How did you prepare your congregation for the series on pornography?

DENNIS: I told our church that there would be moments when they would feel awkward and I assured them that their pastor would feel the same but that, if God's Word addressed an issue, we should be open to discussing it even in a Sunday morning setting.

When I did the series on pornography there were sessions only for men, one for women and one for parents. Last year we even dedicated a Sunday where the men had a separate worship service from the women because of the subject matter. I didn't know how that would work but it was a great success.

BP: What are your hopes for the Join One Million Men roll-out at the SBC annual meeting?

DENNIS: My hope is that this launch would get the attention of pastors and help them see that the churches they serve are being adversely affected by pornography. I want the pastors to get burdened that they are the gatekeepers and if they bring this to the attention of the church, it becomes important to the people of the church. I also pray that women would see that they play a critical role through prayer and communication with the church leadership. If I had a tagline for Join One Million Men, it would be, "Let's start the conversation."

As we move from Mother's Day to Father's Day children are on my mind. Children never cease to amaze me. Of course, all of them are cute and some are just absolutely astounding with their perception of life. Their perception of God, the world, the creation and the hereafter are all incredible. From time to time through the years as boys and girls would make decisions to follow Christ, there would be an adult who would say, "Do you think they understand?" And to be honest, I nearly always think they understand far beyond those of us who are adults.

It was Jesus who said, "Suffer the little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14). While there was a moment that the disciples wanted to keep the children at bay and keep them away from the Lord, Jesus said, "No, I want them to come to me for they have an understanding and a perception beyond those of you who are adults." Pretty amazing, isn't it? The children often see way beyond our ability to understand, see or perceive.

Recently, one of my grandsons wrote a letter to God that I was privileged to see and read. It was simple and amazingly profound and not because it was my grandson, but because it was a child. He wrote, "Dear God, I love you. Thank you for me." Then he signed his name. I confess that when I read it my initial response was that maybe I needed to talk to him about being filled with pride or an arrogance that was a little over the top. Realizing that it came from a sweet spirited, innocent child, I began to think well that is fantastic that a little child would have the kind of spiritual perception to say without remorse, "Lord, Jesus, I thank



Amazing Perception

you and I thank you for me." Furthermore, I thought about how many adults would be so much better off if they simply knew who they were and how much better life would be if they could live in joyful celebration that God made them just as they are for His glory.

It is amazing how many of God's people who are grown adults are not able to or do not celebrate who and what they are and the way they are. A mental deficiency here, a physical problem there, a moment out of their past, a fear out of their future and there they are stuck in a world which they do not like. They wonder, query and moan over why God made them the way that He did or why He did not upgrade some of their deficiencies. That leads me to suggest a few vital truths that will help each of us through life. Let me give you three words that will encourage you and possibly even help you to come to the place to say, "God, thank you for me."

The first word is celebrate. Rec-

ognize that God Almighty even as He created Adam and Eve has created you wonderfully. He knows your DNA, your abilities and inabilities. He knows that there is something wonderful about you. Accept who and what you are. Sure everybody can improve and we can apply ourselves to the best of our ability, but sometimes we just have to accept that we will never win the Olympics. We will never win the beauty contest or the talent show. The bundle of our skillset may not ever allow us to be listed among the Who's Who or even the What's What, but that is alright. The phrase that became so popular a few years ago that I personally did not care a whole lot for is true in this case. **It is what it is**, but what it is does not mean that you are not significant and that who you are and the package that God has made you to be is not worth a great deal.

Word two is concentrate. Do not spend all of your day focused on what you do not have, what you cannot do

and who you will never be. Rather take the time before the Lord to concentrate on what He has given you. I think of Joni Eareckson Tada and the incredible impact that she has worldwide encouraging, inspiring and blessing the body of Christ. There are very few people who wake up each day and face the challenges that are before them with as much difficulty as she does. And yet her warm smile, vibrant personality and Christ energized life touches individuals who see her in crowds of thousands as they listen to her speak. Stop and concentrate on one single thing that God would have you do and that you can accomplish. Now set out to do it.

The third word that I would give you is cooperate. When Paul wrote to the church at Corinth he spent a great deal of time trying to help them and us understand that not everyone has every gift. In I Corinthians 12:12-31, he pictures the body of Christ as a human body. The hand cannot do what the ear can do, but both are vitally important. A foot cannot accomplish what the tongue can, but which of you would vote to do without either one. I would venture to say that everyone you know can do something that you cannot do. But the reverse is true of you, so the point is that each of us with our own gifts and lack of gifts has a work to do and a place to fill. Rejoice that others are helping and involved as no doubt they will look at you and rejoice also.

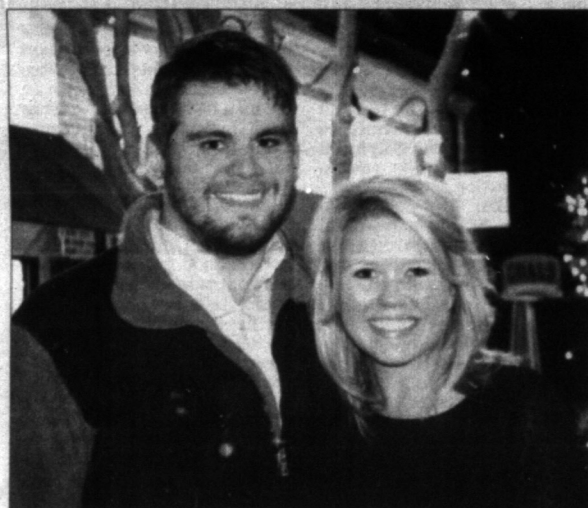
Pause for a moment and talk to the Father today. Tell God you love Him, and then with humility wrapped in grace venture to say, "God, I thank you for me."

The author can be contacted at directions@mmbc.org.

Vacation Bible School

- **Neshoba Church, Union:** June 17 - 21, 5 - 8 p.m. Call (601) 774-877 for information.
- **Unity Church, Leakesville:** June 17 - 21, 6 - 9 p.m.
- **New Hope Church, Como:** June 17 - 21.

Staff Changes



Kevin Barnette has been named the new youth director at **FIRST CHURCH, EUPORA**. He and his fiancée, Taylor Spratlin, both of Vardaman, were treated to a welcome reception/bridal shower May 19.

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MS POSITIONS

YOUTH PASTOR/DIRECTOR/MINISTER/COORDINATOR. Denomination: Southern Baptist. First Baptist church Collinsville, MS is seeking a full-time Youth Pastor, see ypac@fbcms.com for further details.

YALE STREET BAPTIST CHURCH SEEKING A BI-VOCATIONAL PASTOR. Dead line for resumes is 6-30-2013. Send resumes to 510 University Cleveland, MS 38732.

GRACE UNITED BAPTIST CHURCH, DECATUR, MS IS SEEKING A BI-VOCATIONAL PASTOR. Please send resumes to Grace United Baptist Church, P. O. Box 26, Decatur, MS 39327.

HAMILTON BAPTIST CHURCH IN HAMILTON, MS IS SEEKING BI-VOCATIONAL MINISTER OF MUSIC. Send resumes to Larry Whitaker, Chairman, 40264 Hamilton Road, Hamilton, MS 39746.

IUKA BAPTIST CHURCH OF IUKA, MS IS CURRENTLY SEEKING A FULL-TIME PASTOR Denomination: Southern Baptist. Please send resumes to: ibcpastors@gmail.com or Pastor Search Committee, 130 Cypress St., Iuka, MS 38852.

BUCATUNNA BAPTIST CHURCH located south of Meridian in the Energy-Snell community of Clark County is actively seeking God's man for the position of a Bi-vocational Youth Minister. Please email resumes to ddhcb@bellsouth.net or mail to BBC Search Committee, P.O. Box 665, Marion, MS 39342.

THE WAY COMMUNITY CHURCH IS LOOKING TO FILL THE POSITION OF A BI-VOCATIONAL YOUTH MINISTER. We are a contemporary SBC. Please send resume to PO Box 1123, Louisville, MS 39339. www.thewaycommunitychurch.net

CLASSIFIEDS

CONCORD BAPTIST ASSOCIATION IS SEEKING A FULL TIME DIRECTOR OF MISSIONS. Please send resumes to: Concord Baptist Associations, P. O. Box 1884, Murfreesboro, TN 37133. These must be in by July 4th.

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MOORE

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are easy to caricature. Some assume they believe the will is like a computer program operated by God, or that the Gospel isn't freely offered to all people. Evangelical Calvinists believe in the free offer of the Gospel to all people, just as they believe in the universal command of the law of God. They believe that, left to ourselves, we will all run away from the law and we will all run away from the Gospel. We see the light of Christ, and we hide because, in our sin, we don't want to meet our God.

The Calvinist doctrine of effectual calling means that the Spirit works through preaching to overturn the power of the devil, to liberate our wills so that we can see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. God doesn't overpower our wills; he frees us from occupation by the deceiving demonic powers.

This, too, has religious liberty implications, that again all Christians, even those who disagree on the theological details, should affirm. The Spirit convicts of sin; Caesar doesn't. That means one can't coerce faith into being or out of being with the threat of punishment, regardless of whether one is an Islamic ayatollah or a secularist parliament.

Some Baptists and other Christians agree with the Arminians more on the "how" questions of salvation. Some Baptists and other Christians agree more with the Calvinists. Lots of others are somewhere in the middle. We all agree on the "what" questions of salvation and the "why" questions of salvation. Most importantly we all agree on the "who" question of salvation: Jesus Christ crucified.

We will seek to search the Scriptures on everything God has told us. But we're not that far apart. And even when we disagree, we can listen to the important emphases that each tradition brings, emphases that are grounded in God's word and God's Gospel.

We all believe in God's sovereignty and we all believe in human freedom, though we differ on the qualifications of both. But when the government tries to be the ultimate sovereign, or to coerce free consciences, we know to stand against that, and for another Kingdom, together.

Russell D. Moore is president of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention. This first appeared on his website, RussellMoore.com.

Just for the Record



WESTWOOD CHURCH, MERIDIAN, recognizes its Bible drillers: Mackenzie Britt, Brenley Lippert, Erin Gibson, Isabelle Marshall, Tyra Couper, Evan Grace Branstetter, Jonathan Minchew, Daniel Eratu, and Orlando Davis. Ann Culpepper and Teresa Farrior, leaders.



BISSELL CHURCH, LEE COUNTY, observed Mother's Day May 12, recognizing the following mothers, from left: Carra Larsen, youngest mother; Grace Filder, oldest mother; Eleanor Smith, pastor's wife; Jessica Mancill, youngest baby; and Vicky McDaniel, mother with the most grandchildren. Roger Smith, pastor.



RIENZI CHURCH, RIENZI, held a baby dedication Mother's Day.



HARPERVILLE CHURCH, HARPERVILLE, held a baby dedication May 12.



THRASHER CHURCH, BOONEVILLE, held a Law Enforcement Appreciation Day May 27.



YALE STREET, MID-DELTA ASSOCIATION: Children's drillers Chloe Stewart and Morgan Mounce; student drillers Becca Weaver and Hannah Cottam; leaders Tina Joseph and Trudie Weeks.



NESHOBA CHURCH, UNION, honored graduates Joe Parker, Haley Moore, Faith Westberry, Anthony Klein, Laney Chesney, Tyler Hollingsworth, and Joe Parker at a recognition ceremony and Bible presentation.



FIRST CHURCH, CALHOUN CITY, recognized graduating seniors Rainer Nichols, Ty Burton, Ryne Lee, Reagan Hardin, Brooks Goodson, Lauren Denley, Kasey Hodge, and Amanda Bollinger.

College and Seminary News

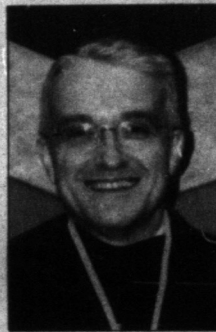
Shirley Tipton, executive secretary in the office of School of Education Dean Don Locke at **MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE**, has received the Van "Doc" Quick Outstanding Staff Award.



WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY'S Coach Steve Knight, athletic director and head coach for the men's basketball team, was named the Southern States Athletic Conference (SSAC) Athletic Director of the Year at the annual SSAC awards banquet on May 20.



David Miller has been named **MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE'S** Distinguished Professor of the Year. Miller teaches English, and is chairman of the university's Honors Council. He has been at MC for over 20 years.



In other College and Seminary News:

► Two Mississippi students graduated from **Southwestern Seminary**, Fort Worth, during spring commencement May 10. Degrees were conferred on 234 students. Students were Trent Odom, Liberty Church, Waynesboro, with a Master of Arts in Christian Education (MACE) in student ministry; and Bryan Bogue, Fairview Church, Columbus, with a Master of Divinity (MDiv).

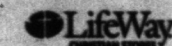


Ten students from William Carey University were formally inducted into the Mississippi Delta chapter of Kappa Mu Epsilon mathematics honor society on May 1 in the Lucile Parker Gallery on the Hattiesburg campus. Inductees were (front row, left to right) Lauren Anderson, Braxton; Shelby Barrett, Lumberton; Ashton Elerson Rea, Petal; (back row, left to right) Brennan McDaniel, Oakdale, La.; Randy Wright, Hattiesburg, Bailee Hickman, Petal, and Miles Deaton, Hattiesburg. Not pictured are Marcia Adamo, Seminary, and Isaac Hitt and Hannah Martin, both of Columbia.

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Are you looking for a new fresh wind from the Holy Spirit? Are you looking for new excitement for your Sunday School or Small Groups? If so, you need to come to the Ridgecrest Baptist Church in Madison from 8-10 a.m. for a morning filled with enthusiastic encouragement, and exciting training to assist you and your leaders. We will also have 20 final year conference leaders for your school, children, student, adult, pastoral, and general officer leadership. Our keynote speaker is Rev. Arlen Taylor, Minister of Education First Baptist Woodstock, Georgia, who, along with Dr. Anthony Hunt, has seen their church experience exponential growth in the past decade. AND, you will find a multitude of conferences with excellent conference leaders designed to meet your needs.

Please count this as my personal invitation to YOU to join with us. God has a great morning in store for us.

Kelly D. Young, D. Min.
Director, Sunday School Department



PRESCHOOL

Help I'm A New Preschool Teacher (teaching 3 years or less) • Creative Teaching • Creating a Learning Environment • Preschool Bible • Study for Life Curriculum Overview • Bridging the Gap

CHILDREN

Help I'm A New Children's Teacher (teaching 3 years or less) • High Tech AND High Touch • Children's Bible Study for Life Curriculum Overview • Harnessing Today's vast Resources • Parent Discipleship • Creative Teaching

STUDENT

General Session: Student Sunday School With a Purpose & Why we Do Sunday School in a Tech Driven/Online World • Connecting With Students Outside the Walls of the Church • Helping Struggling Students • Engaging Students in the Bible • Student Leadership Partnering with Church Leadership

YOUNG ADULT

Keeping Your Teaching Relevant • Ministering in Your Context

MEDIAN ADULT

Keeping Your Teaching Relevant • Discipling New Teachers

SENIOR ADULT

Keeping Your Teaching Relevant • Passing On the Sunday School legacy

ALL ADULT AGES

Help I'm A New Adult Teacher (teaching 3 years or less) • Adult Bible Study for Life Curriculum Overview

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Testimony COOPERATIVE PROGRAM



featuring
Casey Williams

CP Impacting Lives and Shaping The Future

As a sophomore in college, with a sense of God's calling on my life, I chose to attend William Carey University. This was due in part to the opportunity to receive funds for those persons surrendering to Church Ministry. I am extremely grateful for the Cooperative Program that supports our Southern Baptist Colleges and gave me an excellent education that would have been otherwise financially unavailable. Through that season of life, I was blessed to meet the woman who would later become my wife of now seven years. I also began to establish a network with future Ministers across the state who now minister all over the world, and to really focus on the opportunity to grow in my theological and ministerial education.

After receiving my Degree from William Carey University, I went on to pursue a Masters of Divinity at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. After Katrina in 2005, I began serving Heucks Retreat Baptist Church in Brookhaven while pursuing my degree. After 2 1/2 years, I sensed God calling us to a new opportunity. For almost 5 years, we served at Temple Baptist Church in Ruston, LA. Through the years and through the completion of my Mas-

ters of Divinity, there was much growth not only in my education and ministry, but also our family. In March of 2010, my wife and I welcomed our little daughter, Chandler Grace, into the world; and in that same year, through a Ukrainian adoption, we welcomed our oldest daughter Ayla Marina, who was 9 years old at the time.

In 2011, I got a call from a mentor in the ministry that had helped equip me while serving in Brookhaven. Mike Brister had been serving at First Baptist Church of Jackson for some time and the church was extending an invitation for me to interview as the Associate Student Pastor. Never would I have imagined that in just 12 years in ministry and 8 years in a full-time role, a position such as this would become a reality. We are so blessed to have been afforded the support through the Cooperative Program and the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board to pursue affordable education, ministerial support and equipping; but also a sense of value that the investment made will help the future of ministers across the world. We pray the best is yet to come for us in ministry, and we owe a debt of gratitude to the support we have received through the Cooperative Program.

Bible Drill

The State Selection Tournament for Bible drills was held at Broadmoor Church, Madison, April 20.

FRIEND OF BIBLE DRILL HONOREE



Abby Rich is a member of Prentiss Church, Prentiss. She is currently enrolled at Mississippi College. Rich completed nine years in Bible drill in 2011. She began coaching others in Bible drill and help with associational and state drills after high school graduation. Rich was the lead clinician for the student drillers at the fall Bible drill retreat in 2012 and was a caller in the 2013 season. She is shown with Ken Hall, consultant, Discipleship and Family Ministry Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

MIDDLE SCHOOL WINNERS



From left: Alex Janes, North Ripley Church, Ripley, third place; Bethany Langley, Prentiss Church, Prentiss, first place; Cade Holland, Pinelake Church, Brandon, second place.

HIGH SCHOOL WINNERS



From left: Auburn McCormick, Koinonia Church, Lee Association, second place; Paul Batol, First Church, Long Beach, first place; Hannah Page, Crossgates Church, Brandon, third place.

NINE YEAR SCHOLARSHIP DRILLS



From left: Spencer Remley, First Church, Summit, second place; Zach Daley, Prentiss Church, Prentiss, first place; Lauren Middleton, Calvary Church, Batesville, third place.

Northeast students take the Gospel to Bourbon Street

By Wayne Vandiver
Correspondent

The Northeast Mississippi Community College Baptist Student Union (BSU) in Booneville took its eighteenth consecutive weekend mission trip to Bourbon Street in New Orleans earlier this year. The purpose was to hand out specially-printed Gospel tracts entitled, "How to Get to Heaven from New Orleans, LA," and witness to people on Bourbon Street and in the French Quarter.

Twenty students and two BSU directors went to New Orleans this year to share the

Gospel with people on this well-known party street.

One of the helpful aspects of the trip is that students who have gone on to senior college from Northeast ask if they can go on the trip again and bring senior college friends with them. The spirit of cooperation is always evident. This year, students came from Blue Mountain College, Mississippi University for Women, Mississippi State University, and Northeast. Students from all the BSUs in Mississippi are invited to go on the trip.

The group used signs that stated, "If you are born once,

you will die twice. If you are born twice, you will die once." People on Bourbon Street are hard to talk to most of the time, but the signs appealed to their curiosity. People stopped in the middle of the street and stared. Many would come over to the sign-bearer and ask what it meant. The BSU student shared the story of Nicodemus in John 3 where Jesus told him, "Unless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Bourbon Street is booming with people, the majority of whom do not have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. People will sometimes compli-

ment the BSU students on what they are doing, but most just want to ignore them and what they have to say. Some like to challenge students with questions like, "How do you know there is really a God?" or "How can you be sure the Bible has not been corrupted by man?" Others like to ask, "If God loves people so much, why did He tell Israel to kill so many people in the Old Testament?"

The trip has proven to be a witnessing laboratory for the students. Each year students go who have never before witnessed to anyone. After a couple of hours on Bourbon Street,

the students have a boldness in sharing that they didn't have when they arrived.

Mission trips such as this one are made possible by the churches and associations that support the Northeast BSU with their prayers and finances, as well as by gifts to the Mississippi Cooperative Program that support BSU ministries. For more information on the mission trips, contact the Northeast BSU at northeastbsu@hotmail.com.

Vandiver is BSU director at Northeast Mississippi Community College in Booneville.

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this organization shall be Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union, Auxiliary to the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

The purpose shall be to promote Christian missions through the organization of Woman's Missionary Union in the churches and ministries of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

ARTICLE III. RELATIONSHIPS

Section 1. Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union is governed by an Executive Board comprised of officers, area representatives and members-at-large. The professional staff shall be ex-officio members without vote.

Section 2. Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union functions within Mississippi Baptist Convention Board policies.

Section 3. Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union shall cooperate with the Mississippi Baptist Convention in the promotion of Christian missions through a program of study, prayer, giving, and action.

Section 4. Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union, recognizing the autonomy of area, associational and church Woman's Missionary Union organizations, shall cooperate on each level to achieve unity of purpose and collective action.

Section 5. Offerings promoted shall include Lotte Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions, Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions, Margaret Lackey Offering for State Missions, and Edwina Robinson Woman's Missionary Union Special Day Offering.

Section 6. Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union shall strongly support and promote the Cooperative Program of the Southern Baptist Convention.

ARTICLE IV. MEMBERS

The members of each Woman's Missionary Union organization in churches and ministries of the Mississippi Baptist Convention shall comprise the membership of Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union.

ARTICLE V. MEETINGS

Section 1. A regular meeting of the Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union shall be held annually, time and place shall be recommended by the Woman's Missionary Union professional staff, with the assistance of the Executive Board.

Section 3. Woman's Missionary Union members present in any session of an annual meeting shall constitute the voting body. Business shall



Bylaws of Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union



be conducted when scheduled in the printed annual meeting program; exceptions shall be made when the body votes to schedule an additional business session.

ARTICLE VI. THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Section 1. Regular meetings of the Executive Board shall be held semi-annually.

Section 2. Special meetings may be called by the president, or shall be called at the request of at least one third of the voting members of the Executive Board.

Section 3. The Executive Board shall nominate all executive and professional personnel on the staff of Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union consistent with Executive Board and Mississippi Baptist Convention Board policies with election by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Section 4. The Executive Board shall perform its tasks through committees appointed by the president in consultation with the executive director-treasurer.

Section 5. The Executive Board shall be responsible for formulating broad policies for integrating the work of the committees of the Board and of the executive and professional staff.

Section 6. The Executive Board shall hold and administer all property on behalf of Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union, and shall have the power of trustees in business matters, such as acquiring and conveying property.

Section 7. The Executive Board shall administer the Edwina Robinson Woman's Missionary Union Special Day Offering, Garaywa Camp and Conference Center fees, and Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union's allocation of the Margaret Lackey Offering for State Missions.

Section 8. The Executive Board shall hold the executive director-treasurer responsible for the administration, development, and execution of established plans, policies, and broad programs of the Executive Board.

Section 9. Should a vacancy occur in an area office, nominees will be solicited from the area leadership and temporary appointment made by the president until formally elected at the next annual meeting.

Section 10. The officers:

- A. The officers shall be a president, vice president, and a secretary.
- B. These officers shall be elected at the annual meeting and shall hold office for one year. The term of elected officers shall not exceed four successive one year terms.
- C. One year shall elapse before officers may be eligible for election to the previously held office.
- D. The officers shall have served on the Executive Board for at least one year.
- E. The term of office shall begin at the final adjournment of the annual meeting.
- F. The duties of the various officers shall be such as are specified in these bylaws, and by the policy of the Executive Board of Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union.
- G. Should a vacancy occur in the office of president, the vice-president shall assume the office of president until the position shall be filled by election at the next annual meeting.
- H. Should a vacancy occur in the office of vice-president, the position shall be filled by election at the next annual meeting.
- I. Should a vacancy occur in the office of secretary, the Officer Selection Committee will appoint a replacement until the position shall be filled by election at the next annual meeting.
- J. The Officer Selection Committee shall select the following nominees each year: president, vice president, and secretary.
- K. The Officer Selection Committee shall be composed of the area representatives.
- L. Following the annual meeting and preceding the next regularly scheduled Executive Board meeting, the secretary shall meet with the Officer Selection Committee for organization and the election of a chairman.
- M. The Officer Selection Committee shall meet at the regularly scheduled Executive Board meeting prior to annual meeting.
- N. After selecting nominees, the Officer Selection Committee shall expediently obtain the consent of all nominees.
- O. The chairman shall bring the report of the Officer Selection Committee to Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union in annual meeting.
- P. Nominations may also be made from the floor. Should there be more than one

Section 11. Area Representatives

- A. The tenure of office for area representatives shall not exceed three successive one year terms. One year shall elapse before one would be eligible for election to the board in the same position.
- B. After nominations, area representatives will be recommended by the president and executive director-treasurer for election at the annual meeting.
- C. The term of office shall begin at the final adjournment of the annual meeting.

Section 12. Members-at-Large

- A. The tenure of office for members-at-large shall not exceed three successive one year terms. One year shall elapse before one would be eligible for election to the board in the same position.
- B. After nominations, members-at-large will be recommended by the president and executive director-treasurer for election at the annual meeting.
- C. The term of office shall begin at the final adjournment of the annual meeting.

ARTICLE VII. COMMITTEES

Section 1. The president and the executive director-treasurer shall be ex-officio members of all committees of Woman's Missionary Union except the Officer Selection Committee.

Section 2. Committees, standing or special, shall be appointed by the president as authorized by Woman's Missionary Union or the Executive Board in consultation with the executive director-treasurer.

ARTICLE VIII.

PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order Revised shall govern Woman's Missionary Union in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are consistent with these bylaws.

ARTICLE IX. AMENDMENTS

The bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote at any annual meeting provided that the proposed amendment has been published in two issues of The Baptist Record at least one month before the WMU annual meeting and has also been submitted in writing to the Executive Board at its last semi-annual meeting.

Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union Bylaws,
Revised, August 2013

SCRIPTURE SCRAMBLE

NDA ETH LLA URTST OTNU NI AENL
ITWH HNEIT OLDR RAETH RSOEPRBV
NTO ATUDENNGINRS ADN NI WNO
HYT KAODLEWNGEC EITNH LAL IMH
AWSY TYH IREDCT NAD LHALS
TPSHA EH ETHER IVFE XSI

Have fun with scrambled words and exercise your Bible knowledge. Unscramble each word and rearrange the word order to discover the verses and scripture reference from the King James Version.

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Whoever follows me will not walk
in darkness but will have the
light of life." (John 8:12)

Simply share the following prayer
with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you.
(I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins
and freedom from eternal
death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose
from the grave to forgive my sins
and to restore my relationship
with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ
into my life. From this time on,
I want to live in a loving relationship
with Him. (I receive Christ as
my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave
the right to become children of God, even to
those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a
local Southern Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

LOTTIE

cont. from p. 1

will be won to Christ."

Page acknowledged that the offering "could have been better" but added that "it is exciting to see the expression of a mission-minded passion on the part of Southern Baptists."

Though the 2012 offering fell short of the \$175-million national goal, "We are grateful first and foremost to the Lord for all that He provides," said David Stevenson, IMB treasurer and vice

president for finance. "We have confidence that He knows just exactly what we need and also knows exactly when we need it. We are grateful that He chooses to use Southern Baptists in such a great way to provide the support we need."

The IMB's purpose is to serve Southern Baptist churches and assist them in obeying the Great Commission of Jesus Christ to make disciples among all peoples. But the marginal level of increases in mission support in recent years — balanced against the sheer number of lost people

worldwide — led Elliff to issue an "urgent appeal" in May to Southern Baptists to "carry the Gospel to the ends of the earth — now."

"There are over 7 billion people on this globe, and unless something changes drastically, radically, it is estimated that fewer than half will ever have the slightest connection with evangelical Christianity in their lifetime," Elliff said during the IMB trustees' May 14-15 meeting in Rogers, Ark. "Why would God entrust to us the greatest lostness in all of history if He did not expect us to do something about it?"

VBS

cont. from p. 1

considered discontinuing the annual VBS for lack of workers — even with a three-day event. But when Owens arrived, she asked to give it one more opportunity.

With her dynamic personality and people skills, she sought to change the mentality of the congregation to view VBS in a different light.

"It's not a children's ministry. It's a church-wide event," Owens told them. The workers responded — 254 volunteers last year — and staff was assigned "hands on" responsibilities.

Elaborate productions were staged in the sanctuary. Even Pastor Craig Connor rode his Harley through the church one year.

With that shift, church members actively distributed registration forms to their co-workers, neighbors and friends, handing them out in stores and places of business. Registration forms were given to six local schools — places where church members had already conducted a prayer walk. Yard signs in members' yards encouraged neighbors to come.

One church member enlisted five families among co-workers. Another family was approached by a neighbor with a special needs child, compelled by their yard sign.

"We educate our folks to reach beyond the walls of the church and that it is their responsibility to invite their friends, co-workers and neighbors," Owens said.

The community has responded.

One year Owens asked Crystal, the drive-through attendant at the local "Dan-D Donuts," to bring her grandchildren to VBS. At the end of the week, one of them accepted Christ as Savior.

Last year, the church identified 124 unchurched children among those in attendance.

Not only is VBS a church-wide effort, but Owens and other church leaders have initiated intentional evangelism as a core value of the week. Last year's VBS resulted in 14 children baptized.

Nine-year-old Tyler Hendley was one. He attended VBS with other children from the government-sponsored after-school program that provides summer daycare for low income communities.

"This was something he wanted to do," his mother Stefanie Hendley said. "They [First Baptist] do a lot for the kids here" including providing backpacks and school supplies. Each week Owens reads Bible stories and "loves on the kids" in one of two such programs.

In past years, First Church leaders intentionally worked to reach and assimilate VBS prospects. Trained FAITH participants visited every family, took

goody bags and exemplified basic growth principles by enrolling families in Sunday School.

While parents graciously responded to the church visitors, few of the families ever returned to church except to attend VBS the following year.

Last year, in an effort to more effectively reach unchurched families, parents were invited to a weekly parenting seminar held on Sunday mornings. The seminar was located in a classroom easily accessible from the church's parking garage — even if it meant temporarily moving an adult class that had met there for 20 years.

The first week, 37 parents arrived at the seminar and brought more than 50 children with them. Then attendance grew. Each family received a children's Bible and were asked to read it nightly to their children.

Throughout the parenting class, the group became closer, forming a nucleus of a bonded small group.

According to Carol Daniel, minister of adult education, careful attention was given to every detail of the parenting class to retain adults as well as children. "We looked at where it was going to be, how we can make it convenient and user-friendly."

Their attention to details paid off in September when 90 percent of the class was transitioned into the newest Sunday School class in the young adult department.

Submission Guidelines

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts

are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either e-mail, CD or DVD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items are generally not publishable. Photographs can not be returned. Please do not attach photos with tape or staples.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mcb.org.

THE VILLAGE VIEW

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GIFTS OF HONOR AND MEMORY

A portion of The Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

FEBRUARY 2013

MEMORIALS

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Paul Wallace
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Sisco
Mr. Marshall "Shorty" Warnock
Mr. & Mrs. Allen W. Clark
Willie Mae Wascom
Mr. & Mrs. J. E. Toney
Mrs. Mildred Clemmons Watkins
Mr. & Mrs. Larry Melton
Mrs. Lucille Watts
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Dew
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Bob Wright
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Hollingsworth
Mrs. Mary O. Crowe
Mr. Tommie York
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas E. Lofton

Mr. & Mrs. Lamont Jarrell
Carson Cooper
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Joy SSC, FBC
Starkville
Greg & Cathy Davis
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry V. Helms
Ms. Virginia Goff
Mrs. Libby Gordon
Mrs. E. J. Grisham
Lydia SSC, FBC
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Ms. Pam Henderson
Ms. Kaye M. Henderson
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Lydia SSC, FBC
Clinton
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Nathan & Lorraine Spiers
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Spiers
Mrs. Norma Walker
Mr. & Mrs. Percy J. Peeler
Mrs. Wanda Williams
Ruth SSC, Calvary BC

MARCH 2013

HONORS

Dr. & Mrs. William Clawson

MARCH 2013

MEMORIALS

Connor Adams
Dr. & Mrs. Victor L. Walsh
Jerry Gene Adams
Mr. & Mrs. James Crosby
Mrs. Magdaline Adams
Charles & Frances Wooten
Mr. & Mrs. Billy Mac Babb
Mr. & Mrs. James A. Alford
Mrs. Helen Brown
Mrs. Sarah C. Scott
Thelma Adams
Linda Branch
Joy Clark
Myrna Morris
Norma McCray
Frances Wheat
James P. "Jim" Allen
Mrs. Glenda C. Fry
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Rev. Tommy Arinder
Ms. Dian Smith
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Mr. & Mrs. Raymond A. Austin
Bill Barbee
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Rev. Bob Barker Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Carl R. Woolery
Carney Bell
Herman & Sharon Dungan
Judy Bennett
Mrs. Hope Hawkins
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Percy & Hilda Peeler
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Allan Brabham
Mr. & Mrs. Garland McGhee
James Bridges
Mrs. Bobbie Bridges & Family
Mr. Billy Brister
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmie L. Manton
Pat Brooks
Mr. Charles W. Holmes
Floyd Broome
Mr. & Mrs. Rex Burrow
Harold D. Buckley
Mr. & Mrs. Donald Cole
Jahazel Buckley
Mr. Ted Buckley
Joe Bullock
Faithful Followers SSC, FBC Pontotoc
Mr. & Mrs. Rex Burrow
Woodrow Bush
Mrs. Betty Jo Schmidt
Johnny Charles Carlisle
Nell Smith SSC, Pleasant Hill BC
Sam Carollo

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Rivers R. Catledge
Mr. Charles W. Holmes
Carol Chapman
Retha Ann Weatherford
Mr. Charles Christmas
Ms. Dixie K. Blankley
Jerri Clanton
FBC Bude
Mrs. Sarah Clay
Mr. & Mrs. Gregg T. Tindle
Mrs. Mary Ellen Coker
Mr. & Mrs. Jesse Strittman
Harry Cole
Mrs. Harry L. Cole
Eric Corley
Steve Stanley Family
Frances Crawford
Fidelis SSC, Morrison Heights BC
Mrs. Billie Lynn Arthur
Mrs. Dorothy Cummings
Mr. & Mrs. Billy Joe Williams
Mrs. Katie Dallas
Jim & June Blair
Gertrude Daugherty
Mrs. Kitty Hill Brewer
Rev. Cornell Daugherty
Fellowship BC
Mr. & Mrs. E. C. Parsons
Mr. & Mrs. Frank O. Crosthwait
Roy D. & Betty R. Hendricks
Earl Davidson
Mike & Debbie Braswell
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Lorena Dean
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Gene Fairchild
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Mrs. Ethel Morris Fleming
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Mrs. Gloria Fay Coon
Fortenberry
Ms. Jeanne Y. Tapp
Mrs. Mary E. Linton
Mr. & Mrs. Carroll Polk
Jerry Fry
Mrs. Tena Haskins
Bud Gafford
Mr. & Mrs. John W. Potter
Mr. Bobby Gardner
Hutto SSC, FBC
Waynesboro
James & Joyce Doherty
Mr. & Mrs. Hubert T. Kendrick
Bobby & Geneva Gardner
James Doherty SSC, FBC Waynesboro
Geneva Gardner
Mr. Bobby C. Gardner
Otis Ray Garner
Mr. & Mrs. Carl R. Woolery
Mary Catherine Gelston
Mrs. Pat Robertson
Mrs. Jessie Lane C. Gordon
Mr. & Mrs. Purvis Huff
Nadine F. Rail
Jean Cayort
Barbara Wilkins

Bettie Niswanger
Barbara James & Joanne Ballance
Larry & Mary Glass
Mr. & Mrs. James E. Clark
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Stringer
Ms. Patti Templet
Ronnie & Diane Hughes
Mrs. Frances D. Phares
Mr. & Mrs. Tony Grimes
Mr. Donald Griffin
Mr. & Mrs. Brooks H. Polk, Jr.
Lena Pearl Griffin
Mr. & Mrs. Danny Withers
Mary Jane Hamilton
Ray & Alana Greer
Hugh Hanberry
Mickey & Bonnie Daughdrill
Charlotte Henry
Kolola BC
Charley Harrell
Branch BC
Mrs. Catherine Harris
Mr. & Mrs. Perry E. Atherton
Bessie Harvey
Mr. & Mrs. Les Robertson
Mr. & Mrs. Wallace Clark
James Earl Harvey
Mrs. Billie Lynn Arthur
Senior SSC, Morrison Heights BC
C. W. Harvison
Mr. & Mrs. David Dewitt
Carl Haskins
Mrs. Tena Haskins
Carr Haskins
Mrs. Tena Haskitis
Susan Haskins
Mrs. Tena Haskins
Bryan Henderson
Mr. & Mrs. Tommy Pinnix
Ms. Grace French
Mrs. Elaine Herring
Mr. W. B. Herring
James "Jabo" Herrington
Mr. & Mrs. Joe E. Turner
Mr. & Mrs. Michael D. Goodin
Mr. & Mrs. Eugene Bowman
The Bowman/Landrum Family
Mr. Ken Herrington
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Roberson
New Hope BC, Meridian
Marie Herrington
Mickey & Bonnie Daughdrill
Edward Hester
Mr. & Mrs. Tommy Pinnix
Houston Hodgins, Sr.
Mr. & Mrs. Lester Herrington
Mrs. Eloise Holliman
Mrs. Lona M. Southerland
Mrs. Mildred Hawkins
Holliman
Mike & Debbie Braswell
Mr. & Mrs. Ricky Pullen
Ms. Marsha Altman
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Mr. & Mrs. Richard Cousino
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Ayres-Delta Implement, Inc.
Ethel Mae Hollowell
Mr. & Mrs. Michael D. Allen & Family
Leone Polk Howard
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Davis
Mary Ellen Howe
Mr. & Mrs. Bill Harris
Billie T. Hudson
Mr. & Mrs. Robert J. Tuggle
Tom Q. Hudson
Mr. & Mrs. Charles H. McMinn
Mr. Harold Hutcherson
Mr. & Mrs. Fred H. Blackledge
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Blair
Danny Ross Ingram
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry V. Helms
Mrs. Dolly Haley Jacobs
Mr. & Mrs. Garry Randall
Irene Jamison
Pedro & Janet Aguilar
Mary Rose Jennings
Mr. & Mrs. Stuart V. Allen
Ocie Jones
Ms. Susan T. McMillan
Mr. Dale Kendrick
Mr. & Mrs. Jerry L. Powell
Mr. & Mrs. Jimmie L. Manton
Mr. & Mrs. Steve C. Johnson
Colonel David Wood Lacy
Mr. & Mrs. Donald L. Thompson
Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Boykin
Mrs. Dianne E. Sellers
Mr. & Mrs. Robert D. Nichols
Roger & Ann Reed
Mr. & Mrs. Palmer C. Davis
Mr. & Mrs. Jim Sledge
Mrs. Beth B. Bounds
Ms. Mildred Roberts
Mr. & Mrs. Bill Gully
Mr. & Mrs.OLON L. Garner
James David Lassett
Parkview BC
Mr. Robert E. Stevens
Mrs. Willie Lavender
Mrs. Lona M. Southerland
David Ledbetter, Sr.
Ms. Mildred E. Phillips
Norma Leggett
Mr. & Mrs. Joe C. Monteith
Pat Lemmerman
Kolola BC
Sadie Littlejohn
Mr. & Mrs. Larry A. Cooley
Elouise Magee
Herman & Sharon Dungan
Corrie Makamson
Larry & Pam Gneimi
Jim Mallard
Mr. & Mrs. Tommy Pinnix

God Delivers His People • Exodus 3:7-10; 12:12-13,29-31; 14:5-6,13-14,21,26

Have you ever faced a seemingly endless crisis? This week's lesson focuses upon the aspect of God's Story that reminds believers of God's compassionate expression of His power on behalf of His people. Readers are encouraged to trust Him on a daily basis even during difficult times. As we examine how God delivered His people from oppression and bondage in Egypt, we can reinforce our own understanding of His active involvement in our lives today. The Exodus is the single greatest event in the Old Testament, a time remembered and celebrated annually by Jews around the world at Passover. The same God who delivered the Hebrews from Egypt wants to liberate people today from the greater bondage of sin.

God Cares (Ex. 3:7-10)

For those cynics who think God is detached from the world and the people He created, Exodus 3:7-10 forms an unambiguous case against them. Pay close attention to the verbs in these verses; above all else, the verbs prove God cares. God declares He has "indeed seen" (emphatic in Hebrew) His people's affliction. He has "heard" their cry, and He "knows" (or experiences) their suffering (3:7). As a result, He has "come down to rescue" them and "to bring them up" out of the land of oppression to the land flowing with milk and honey (3:8). Additionally, God said the cry of the Israelites

has "reached" Him and He has "seen" the way the Egyptians oppressed them (3:9). As a result, God called Moses "to send" him to Pharaoh, to deliver the Israelites, and "to bring" them out of Egypt (3:10).

While the Hebrews languished under the bitter whips of their Egyptians masters, wondering if their cries unto God were being heard, God was involved actively in securing their release and freedom. He cared for them!

We can take great comfort in knowing God cares for us as well. Even during the darkest days of our suffering, God is already at work, preparing our deliverance. So the next time you find yourself dealing with life's difficulties, remember God cares!

God Judges (Ex. 12:12-13,29-31)

When God demonstrates His care for His people, His enemies are thrust into a precarious situation. Pharaoh and the Egyptians found themselves in this position after enslaving God's people for years.



Bible Studies for Life

with W. Wayne VanHorn

Pharaoh's refusal to let God's people go meant inevitable confrontation. God told Moses He would pass through Egypt and strike down the Egyptians' first born sons; in so doing, God would bring judgment on "all the gods of Egypt" (12:12). God would return the Egyptians' acts upon their own heads. They had caused God's firstborn son, Israel, to suffer much, thus God would judge them by slaying their firstborn sons (4:22-23).

When first asked to release the Hebrews, Pharaoh proclaimed, "Who is the LORD that I should obey him and let Israel go? I

do not know the LORD and I will not let Israel go" (5:2). However, in God's Story, God has the final say. The death of the Egyptian firstborn was the necessary form of retributive justice required to convince Pharaoh to let God's people go. When God determined to bring judgment on the gods of Egypt by slaying the Egyptian firstborn, He was declaring to Pharaoh His identity, "I am the LORD" (12:12b). The blood smeared in obedience to God's command, on the door-

posts and lintels of their homes, would protect the Hebrews (12:13). When God judges (12:29), His enemies wail (12:30), then they submit to His original request (12:31).

God Delivers

(Ex. 14:5-6,13-14,21,26)

Pharaoh overcame the shock of the death of his firstborn and urgently sought to recover the services of the Hebrew slaves (14:5). Thus he prepared his chariot and army to pursue the slaves (14:6). The Hebrews soon found themselves trapped between the sea and Pharaoh's advancing forces. This situation seemed deadly and inescapable to them, causing much anxiety (14:10-12). Moses calmed the people, counseling them to "not be afraid" and to "stand firm" (14:13a). Moses had confidence in "the salvation of the Lord" that would once and for all rid the Hebrews of the menacing presence of the Egyptians (14:13b). The Lord would do all the fighting; Israel had only to "be still" (14:14; see also Psalm 46:10). Thus when Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, the way of escape for God's people became the way of judgment and death for His enemies (14:21,26). God delivered His people!

VanHorn is Dean of the Mississippi College School of Christian Studies and the Arts.

Who Said Life Would Be Fair? • Job 15:5-6, 9-10, 20; 16:19-21; 19:5-6, 25-27; 21:7-9

Misunderstanding can be the basis of criticism and accusations as in the case of Job when his friends were totally wrong concerning his suffering. What Job heard from them had no relevance or application to him or his suffering. However, criticism can be used positively when questioned and analyzed to determine which pieces one can agree with and benefit from and which pieces are not appropriate. There may be an element of truth there leading to repentance and re-establishing right relationships with God and with others.

The debate between Job and his friends resumes when Eliphaz reappears a second time with very severe, blunt criticism of Job's first response to him. Eliphaz misjudged Job's motive and attitude behind his responses to the friends' counsel, believing Job spoke with deception and arrogance. He accuses Job of having spoken irreverently—of incriminating himself with his own words because he spoke critically of God. Eliphaz belittles Job in order to gain credibility for himself and his accusations. He asked Job what he knows and what insights he has that he and the others do not have. Again, he warns Job that the wicked man's days are spent in suffering, terror, distress and anguish and may come to an end suddenly all because he is in opposition to God. As Christians learning from Job's

experiences, we have the assurance that our hope is in God no matter how our motives and attitudes are perceived or judged by those around us.

The depth of Job's great sorrow is witnessed in his response to Eliphaz that no matter what he does, his sorrows remain. If he speaks, they are there; if he is silent, they are still with him. He pleads with God, his witness in heaven, for proof of his integrity. In acknowledging that he has an advocate on high and that his intercessor is his friend, he seems to allude to a highly developed concept of God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

He was expressing his underlying faith in God's righteousness, justice, and mercy even though it appeared he was experiencing God's injustice.

Job's friends, exhibiting boastful spirits, continued to confront him and accuse him of having a great secret sin in his life obvious through his suffering and complicated by his hypocrisy in masquerading as

a Godly person. He pleads with them to have compassion on him believing that his troubles have been caused by God—that God has wronged him. Sometimes God is disciplining an individual through suffering, and sometimes he is simply letting one face difficult life situations that may create a crisis of belief for that person.

Job makes a tremendous profession of faith when he speaks of his redeemer in his second response to Bildad: "I know that my

Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth."

Job believes that Christ is ever present in the world. He

is not dead and in a grave like the leaders/founders of other religions. That is the key-stone of the Christian faith. As Paul said, "And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith." I Corinthians 15:14

Redeemer is a familiar term used in scripture in relationship to the family. Redeemer also refers to God in his relation-

ship with Israel. When Job could not find anyone who would stand up for him against the accusations made by his three friends, he remembered his "redeemer," God, the one who would restore his integrity of life and possessions.

Job also knew the Redeemer was eternal, that He would "stand upon the earth in the latter day." Christ will conquer evil in the last days and vindicate the righteous—those who are in a right relationship with Christ. Job's expressions of faith in God were ignored or discounted by his friends, for they never changed their stance of condemnation. We, too, can place our hope in God even when others ignore or discount our claims to trust in God.

From the perspective of Job's friends, the scales of God's justice are balanced in the course of this earthly life—there was no "hereafter" in their theology. Job tried to show Zophar that a theology built on prosperity of the righteous and suffering of the wicked would make life seem terribly unfair, and does not prove true in every case here on earth.

Our hope is in the God of justice who knows all things and who will preside over the accounting in the afterlife.

Duncan is a member of First Church, Starkville.

Explore the Bible

with Marion D. Duncan



Revivals & Homecomings

► **Pilgrim's Rest Church,** 11 a.m., followed by fellowship lunch and 6 p.m.; Mon. — Wed., 7 p.m.; pastor Steve Jordan, speaker.

► **Okahola Church, Purvis:** Homecoming, June 23; pot lunch dinner following morning service; Reggie Sadler Family, music, 2 p.m.; Jim Stagg, speaker.

► **Hebron Church, Grenada:** 105th homecoming, June 23; service, 10 a.m., followed by fellowship meal; Bill Monaghan, speaker and music.

► **Palestine Church, Harrisville:** Homecoming, June 23; service, 11 a.m., followed by lunch; Clint Johnson, speaker; Angela Welch and children of church, music.

Just for the Record

EBENEZER CHURCH, BASSFIELD, held a deacon ordination service May 19. Shown are former pastor Jackie Cooke, Daniel Lee, Joshua Lee, Alan Polk, and pastor Valton Douglas.

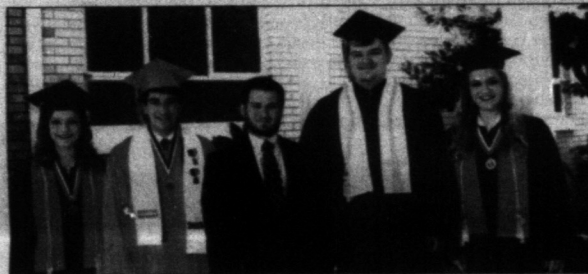


FAITH CHURCH, WEST POINT, celebrated the burning of their building note at their 25th anniversary May 5. Shown are Randy Williams, Lamar Wilbourn, Bill Ladd, Allen Wood, and pastor Ben Yarber.



TOOMSUBA CHURCH, LAUDERDALE ASSOCIATION, ordained Christ Egbert as deacon May 19. Shown are Egbert, his wife Jennifer, and pastor David Caves.

SAULS VALLEY CHURCH, MONTICELLO, recognized their high school graduates Thomas Rials and Tanner Rials. Pastor James E. McKneely is shown presenting Bibles.



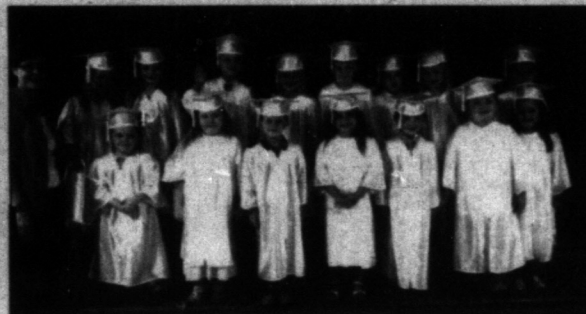
TYBERTOWN CHURCH, TYBERTOWN, recognized its graduating seniors with a crawfish boil and a senior breakfast. Shown are seniors Mary Elizabeth Stringer, Jonah Wood, minister of students Jordan Broyles, Colton Smith, and Laura Lee Dyar.



IMMANUEL CHURCH, GREENWOOD, honored its graduating high school and college students.



CALVARY CHURCH, BOGUE CHITTO, recognized their high school and college graduates. Shown are pastor Hal Hatten, Devon Welch, Amber Martin, Bradi Davis, Rheagan Welch, Brice Roberts, and Shelby Crosby.



Anita Russell, **FIRST CHURCH, EUPORA,** presents the 2013 graduates of the preschool class.



WINSTON ASSOCIATION recently hosted a Transfer Zone conference sponsored by the Adrian Rogers Pastor Training Institute. Shown are pastors from the association with AMD Paul Blanchard and Patrick Moody of the Rogers Institute. The event was partially funded by Margaret Lackey State Missions Offering funds.

In other Church News:

➤ **Broadmoor Church, Madison,** has recently released an album with original songs for worship. The album, entitled *Alive*, has been recorded over the last several months and is an outpouring of the ministry and people of Broadmoor. The album can be purchased at the church or on iTunes, Amazon, and Google Play. For more information, visit www.broadmoor.com/alive.

➤ **Liberty Church, Jefferson County,** is sponsoring SonHarvest County Fair June 22, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., with songs, crafts, games, Bible stories, and snacks. Parents are invited to a closing program June 23, 5 p.m.

NEW POLICY FOR PHOTO SUBMISSIONS

Effective with the July 11, 2013 issue of *The Baptist Record*, all photographs submitted for publication in the newspaper must be sent via e-mail as a jpeg attachment (.jpg). Because of the cost and inconvenience of submitting a printed photograph (which involves taking a digital photograph, having it processed and printed, and the cost of postage involved in mailing), we are making this change to help both the sender and *The Baptist Record* to be good stewards. Photos can be submitted to *The Baptist Record* via e-mail at no cost, as opposed to the costs noted above. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.